

REMARKS

Claims 1-43 and 45-52 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-5, 14, 18 and 50-52 are amended. The amendments introduce no new matter.

Reconsideration of the application based on the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10-15, 17-19, 27, 35, 39, 43, 48 and 50-52 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,741,262 to Munson et al. (hereinafter "Munson") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,121,968 to Arcuri et al. (hereinafter "Arcuri") and U.S. Patent No. 6,570,667 to Hattori et al. (hereinafter "Hattori"); and, on pages 7-17, rejects the rest of the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Munson, Arcuri and Hattori in varying combinations with U.S. Patents Nos. 6,469,719 to Keno et al. (hereinafter "Keno"), 5,754,179 to Hocker et al. (hereinafter "Hocker"), 5,625,783 to Ezekiel et al. (hereinafter "Ezekiel") and 6,443,801 to Moon et al. (hereinafter "Moon"). These rejections are generally identical to prior art rejections made in previous Office Actions, first over a combination of Barrett and Arcuri, then over Arcuri alone, then over a combination of Munson and Arcuri, in combination with the varyingly applied prior art references. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action fails to address previous arguments regarding why the application of the Arcuri reference to render the subject matter of any of the pending claims as obvious is improper. The assertion on page 17 that "Applicant's arguments with respect to the [August 18, 2006] Amendment have been considered but are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection" is inaccurate, misleading, and improper. The numerous arguments that have been made over the course of the prosecution of this application regarding Arcuri and the combination of Arcuri and Munson are not "moot" simply in view of the addition of the new reference to Hattori.

For example, Applicants previously argued, and maintain, that the disclosure of Munson is inapplicable to the subject matter of the pending claims, as is the disclosure of Arcuri. As the Office Action does not address this argument, it is substantially reiterated below.

Munson teaches an expert control management settings method and interface for displaying and configuring color management settings for printing devices (Abstract). Munson teaches a user interface in which functions of a device are displayed on a display of a user's personal computer through a querying server. As such, the disclosure of Munson is as inapplicable to the subject matter of the pending claims as is the disclosure of Arcuri. The subject matter of the pending claims is directed to a device and method for displaying on a display panel of the device itself menu selections associated with the device. As such, any combination of Munson and Arcuri cannot reasonably be considered to have suggested the subject matter of any of the pending claims, even in combination with the other varyingly applied references.

Applicants are still concerned that the Examiner continues to refuse to address Applicants' thrice-asserted arguments regarding the inapplicability of the Arcuri reference to the subject matter of any of the pending claims. Arcuri teaches drop-down menus provided by a computer program in two states -- a short menu state and a long menu state -- indicating that when a user opens a desired menu, the menu opened will initially take the form of a short menu of executable commands which are a subset of the total number of executable commands available under the selected menu (Abstract).

Independent claim 1 recites, and independent claims 2-5, 14 and 18 varyingly recite, among other features, a display device in an image forming apparatus (or a display method for displaying user-selectable image forming function options on a display unit in an image forming apparatus) comprising a display unit that displays a plurality of user-selectable image

forming function options which can be performed by at least one of the image forming apparatus and an additional device mounted to the image forming apparatus; and a display arrangement control device that judges functions provided to the image forming apparatus or the additional device and determines an arrangement of the plurality of user-selectable image forming function options based on the judgment, and displays the plurality of user-selectable image forming function options on the display unit according to the determined arrangement, wherein a plurality of the available user-selectable image forming function options are displayed in a first case, and less than all of the plurality of the user-selectable image forming function options that are displayed in the first case are displayed in a second case, the display arrangement control device determining the arrangement.

Neither of the principally-applied prior art references can reasonably be considered to teach, or to have suggested, this combination of features for the reasons indicated above as well as for the feature a display arrangement control device that judges functions provided to the image forming apparatus or the additional device and determines an arrangement of the plurality of user-selectable image forming function options based on the judgment. There is no function such as this feature explicitly or inherently disclosed in any of the applied prior art references, nor suggested by these references in combination.

Applicants continue to object to the piecemeal prosecution of the present application based, in large part, on the Examiner's continuing refusal to address Applicants foregoing arguments on the record.

In addition to the foregoing arguments, the current rejections are also unreasonable for at least the following reasons.

For example, the Office Action now relies on Hattori as teaching "a display arrangement control device that judges functions added to the image forming apparatus and determines an arrangement of the plurality of the user-selected image forming function, and

arranges the plurality of user selectable image forming functions options in the determined arrangement." The Office Action references col. 3, lines 17-24 and col. 4, lines 25-40 of Hattori in support of this assertion. Hattori is directed to adding and recognizing facsimile communication functions in image processing devices (see col. 2, lines 7-10 of Hattori). The Office Action's interpretation of what Hattori teaches, or can reasonably be considered to have suggested, fails for at least the following reasons.

Hattori does not teach, nor can it reasonably be considered to have suggested, determining an arrangement of the plurality of user-selectable image forming function options based on the judgment, and displaying the plurality of user-selectable image forming function options on the display unit according to the determined arrangement.

Hattori contemplates receiving data in an image-forming device from external devices. Based on whether a command received from the external device is either a command for the original function or a facsimile communication function, the image-processing device may determine and switch to the appropriate function. The portions of Hattori upon which the Office Action relies recite that the image processing device may comprise means for judging whether or not the facsimile communication unit is mounted to the interface, including means for setting the image processing means to a facsimile communication enabling state, and a means for setting, in a storage area, a memory region for being used for facsimile communication (see col. 3, lines 17-23 and col. 4, lines 21-40 of Hattori). However, these functions cannot reasonably be considered to correspond to a display arrangement control device with the positively recited features of at least claim 1. Rather, this appears to be yet another overly broad and unreasonable application of a reference in an attempt to render obvious the subject matter of the pending claims.

For at least the above reasons, the applied prior art references do not teach, nor can they reasonably be considered to have suggested, the combinations of positively recited

features of claims 1-5, 14 and 18. Additionally, claims 6-13, 15-17, 19-43 and 45-52 are also neither taught, nor would they have been suggested, by the applied prior art references at least for the respective dependence of these claims, directly or indirectly, on allowable independent claims 1-5, 14 and 18, as well as for the separately patentable subject matter that each of these claims recites.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-43 and 45-52 over any combination of the applied prior art references are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-43 and 45-52 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

James E. Golladay, II
Registration No. 58,182

JAO:JEG/hms

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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